



Mwami Nursing School

Photo courtesy of Moses Banda.

# Mwami Adventist School of Nursing

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## MOSES M. BANDA

Moses M. Banda, M.A. (Zambia Open University, Lusaka, Zambia), currently serves as president of East Zambia Field of Seventh-day Adventists. Before earning his Master's degree in Religious Studies, Pastor Banda received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Theology from Rusangu University. He is an ordained minister who has served in various responsibilities for 20 years. He is married to Eness, with whom he has two children.

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Mwami Adventist School of Nursing is a training institution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zambia.

## Developments that Led to the Establishment of the Institution

In 1962, word came that it would no longer be possible for Mwami Adventist Hospital to be associated with Malamulo Hospital in the training of medical assistants.<sup>1</sup> This robbed Mwami of some of its most valuable nursing staff. The hospital depended on the missionary nurses, who were overwhelmed by the growing number of patients visiting the hospital. Establishing a nursing school became an obvious solution.

The hospital had earned a good name across the Republic of Zambia. The Zambia Minister of Health commented in March 1967 that Mwami Hospital was one of the cleanest and best kept hospitals in Zambia.<sup>2</sup> In September 1967, the World Health Organization leprologist said that Mwami was the best hospital in Zambia. Martha Stout, the nurse advisor to the International Council of Nurses, Geneva, was also impressed during her visit to Zambia and Mwami in October 1967.<sup>3</sup>

## Founding of the Institution

The Mwami Adventist Hospital School of Nursing was established in 1962, 35 years after the hospital's founding. "The Mission of the Nursing school was to provide a holistic Nursing Education for Men and Women with the aim of equipping them with adequate professional skills for service to God and Humanity." The Hospital Administration spearheaded the establishment of the nursing school with the support of the union office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Zambia and the government of the Republic of Zambia.<sup>4</sup>

The training institution was established on-site at the hospital. It is 30 kilometers southeast of Chipata City, Eastern Province headquarters, and eight kilometers from the Mwami-Malawi border, in Chief Mpezeni's area of the Ngoni people. The community in the area depends on peasant farming and, therefore, the primary source of income is from gardening and seasonal sales of cash crops; mainly beans, maize, groundnuts, Irish potatoes, and vegetables.

Martha Hansen and Olive Vaughan, the Sister-Tutor and Matron, respectively, opened the doors of the new school of nursing to first student-nurses.<sup>5</sup> Martha Hansen as first Principal Tutor started Set 1 of Enrolled Nursing with seven students. This program is called Zambia Enrolled Nursing. The school used some of the existing hospital infrastructure to conduct training programs. The seven students, being all female, were accommodated in one of the houses at Mwami Adventist Hospital.

The first graduation ceremony was held in 1966. Five nurses graduated, including Zubedha E. Adams, the first Asian nurse to be trained in Zambia. The graduation ceremony was graced by Pastor H. E. Rice from the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Medical Department, and Member of Parliament Mrs. E. Banda. Exeter Hiwa, Medical Assistant at Mwami Adventists Hospital, was the interpreter for the guest speakers.<sup>6</sup> To date, the nursing school has graduated 1,508 students.<sup>7</sup>

In 1967 plans were drawn to affiliate Yuka Adventist Hospital in western Zambia with Mwami Hospital School of Nursing. These plans were discussed in detail during the visit of Martha Stout, Nurse Advisor to the International

Council of Nurses from Geneva, when she visited Mwami that October. Stout was accompanied by K. Sikota, Assistant-Matron-in-Chief of the Ministry of Health, and M. Betty, president of the Zambian Nurses Association.<sup>8</sup> The school enrolled students from Yuka in order to boost staffing levels at Yuka Hospital. Also, in a spirit of collaboration, Mwami Adventist Hospital staff members, including Mr. Bota, Beatrice Katumbi, and Monica Chibeka, were periodically sent to work at Yuka Hospital.<sup>9</sup> However, the idea of affiliating with Yuka Hospital seems to have gone into oblivion as management changed over time.

When Dr. John B. Hoehn and his wife Deanne Hoehn joined Mwami Mission in 1977, they found South African missionaries Ralph Marx, Maintenance Supervisor, and his wife Rita Marx, acting Matron; Americans Dr. and Mrs. John Rogers, and Swedish nurse volunteer Karin Persson, "Sister Tutor" for the enrolled nursing school. Pastor D. J. Nyambosi served as hospital chaplain. There being no other registered nurses at that time, the Zambia Nursing Council threatened to close the nursing school due to the lack of RN teaching staff. The Zambia Nursing Council had already attempted to vote to close the school, but due to a tie vote, the decision was deferred. Dr. Hoehn begged for a little time to get things in order, and the school stayed open. Deanne Hoehn, a registered nurse (RN), began to work part time teaching procedures to the student nurses until regular RN teaching staff could be obtained.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Hoehn sourced nursing help by bringing Kananelo Mofolo, RN, from Lesotho to work at Mwami, and requesting Pastor Frank Hayter to help part time during his vacation with the accounting. Art Morgan came from America as a volunteer builder and began working on the many building projects needed for the hospital and school.<sup>11</sup>

"Sister" (the title for an RN in Zambia) Ruth Rowe, a Canadian volunteer, arrived at Mwami from British Columbia in August 1977.<sup>12</sup> With the support of the Seventh-day Adventist Church through Zambia Union Executive Director Albert Bristow, and Pastor Art Harms, the treasurer, and his wife Ruth, other missionary nurses arrived to put Mwami Hospital and School of Nursing back in shape. Soon missionaries from Lesotho, Rwanda, and local workers from many different parts of Zambia became part of Mwami Mission medical institutions.<sup>13</sup> The school is administered by Mwami Adventist Hospital Board, and chaired by the President of the Southern Zambia Union Conference or his designee. The government is represented by the Chipata District Health Director as board member.<sup>14</sup>

In 1978, Cosmos Chilongo was brought from Malamulo to be laboratory technician. Anita Schlund, RN, came from the United States to be a staff nurse, as did Ruby Taylor, RN, who later came to be the matron. At this time Mwami was on a new course and the School of Nursing was meeting minimum requirements to run a nursing school.<sup>15</sup>

1979 began with plans for the development of the new school of nursing buildings, a dormitory with a dining room, as well as staff housing. The German-based Christoffel Blinden Mission started by enlisting the German EZE organization to fund the balance of the project. Under Art Morgan's supervision, the EZE project built staff

duplexes as rapidly as possible, as Mwami Hospital continued to grow.<sup>16</sup> The original infrastructure was completed by 1981 by the Protestant Central Agents for Development Aid of the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>17</sup>

The institution's student dormitories have been expanded. Student fees and other donations are making the infrastructure developmental project possible. The new Student Library has received the support of the Government of the Republic of Zambia, including the new office building. The government supported the following other new infrastructure projects: in 2009 a new office block at a total cost of ZK231,360, in 2014 a male hostel costing ZK710,260.30, and in 2014/2015 a Lecture Theatre at ZK925,000.00 and a classroom block at ZK180,000. The same year the Union office of the Seventh-day Adventist Church funded the construction of a 1 x 1 classroom block at ZK75, 000.00.

The school trained Enrolled Nurses until 2014, when it was upgraded to train Registered Nurses. In January 2018 the Public Health Nursing and Registered Nurse Midwifery programs began. Registered Midwives and HIV Nurse Practitioner programs are under development.<sup>18</sup> Enrollment levels stand as follows: RNs 88 students, PHNs 53, Direct Midwives 56, and RNM 55, a total of 573 students.

## Future Outlook

Mwami Adventist School of Nursing is on a progressive path to becoming a university to offer degree programs, a dream to soon be realized. The Southern Zambia Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been providing scholarship for staff development to Loma Linda University in the United States and other medical institutions. Some staff beneficiaries include Kanyemba Muchelenga, Richard Moyo, Gift Sing'ombe, Colonel Mainza, and Esther Mwamba.<sup>19</sup>

Infrastructure development is currently ongoing. A Zambian government-funded new library has been built at a total cost of ZK372,965.75. Two student dormitories, one by Linter Architect from Lusaka at ZK1, 392,000.00,<sup>20</sup> and another hostel by Chipata Trades Training Institute, on labor based at ZK153,000.00, have been built, funded from general student fees and donations, with capacities of 80 students each. More dormitories, laboratories, classrooms, staff housing units, and a guest house await construction.<sup>21</sup>

Some developmental projects are made possible by the donor community (Friends of Mwami from the United States of America), the Government of the Republic of Zambia, Southern Zambia Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and from student user fees.

## List of Principal Tutors

Martha Hansen (1962<sup>22</sup>-1967), E. J. Van Der Colff (1967<sup>23</sup>-1970), Mavies Orr (1970-1971), Bee Hart (1971-1972), O. Marianhae (1972-1973), Larry W. Eustace (1973-1974), O. Marianhane (1974-1976), Karen Persson (1976-1979), N. L. Castrence (1979-1980), Phyllis Collins (1980), Becky Gainer (1980-1981), Patricia Miller (1981-1984), Twyla

Reimche (1984-1989), Leslie Stahlnecker (1985-1988), Tabeth Ndele (1989-1990), Betty Hewitt (1990-1993), Offelia Osorio (1993-2000), Benadett Mwape (2000-2002), Besta Phiri (2003-2011), George Chama Mwamba (2012-to date).<sup>24</sup>

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## NOTES

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